

NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION CENTER



Top Secret

25X1

basic imagery interpretation report

Major Air Facilities, Cuba (S)

AIR BASE FACILITIES

BE: Various

Top Secret

25X1

RCA-05/0000/80
JULY 1960

Copy 49

Page Denied

Top Secret RUFF

25X1

25X1

INSTALLATION OR ACTIVITY NAME					COUNTRY
Major Air Facilities					CU
UTM COORDINATES	GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES	CATEGORY	BE NO.	COMIREX NO.	NIETB NO.
—	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
MAP REFERENCE					
ONC. Sheet J-26, scale 1:1,000,000 (UNCLASSIFIED)					
LATEST IMAGERY USED			NEGATION DATE If required		
			NA		

25X1

Installation Name	Geographic Coordinates	Category	BE No	COMIREX No	NIETB (MRN) No
San Antonio de Los Banos Airfield	22-52-16N 082-30-34W				
Santa Clara Airfield	22-29-24N 079-56-35W				
Holguin Airfield	20-47-07N 076-18-54W				
Cienfuegos Airfield	22-09-00N 080-24-51W				
Campo Libertad Airfield	23-05-41N 082-25-55W				
Ignacion Agramonte Airfield	21-25-11N 077-50-54W				
San Julian Airfield	22-05-42N 084-09-07W				
Jose Marti International Airfield	22-59-22N 082-24-27W				
Antonio Maceo Airfield	19-58-09N 075-50-09W				
Playa Baracoa Airfield	23-02-05N 082-34-42W				
Managua Airfield	22-58-13N 082-16-32W				
San Pedro Highway Strip	22-58-43N 082-28-15W				
Kawama Airfield	23-07-33N 081-17-50W				
Los Canos Airfield	20-05-05N 075-09-31W				
Manzanillo International Airfield	20-17-30N 077-07-44W				
Nueva Gerona Airfield	21-50-15N 082-46-48W				
Pinar Del Rio South	22-20-05N 083-38-40W				

25X1

ABSTRACT

1. (S/D) This report provides an abbreviated summary of and introduction to major Cuban military and civilian air facilities. Because of the relatively large number of airfields in Cuba, only those with runway lengths of 1,500 meters (approximately 5,000 feet) or greater and of probable military association in the event of a national emergency will be discussed. This report includes selected satellite imagery, summaries of the functions of and facilities at each airfield, and the air order-of-battle.

INTRODUCTION

2. (TSR) Major identifiable elements of the Cuban Revolutionary Air Force (CRAF) are one MIG-23 (FLOGGER) ground attack squadron, four MIG-21 (FISHBED) air defense squadrons, one FISHBED reconnaissance squadron, four MIG-15/-17 (FAGOT/FRESCO) ground attack/support squadrons, one (possibly two) HIP helicopter ground attack/support squadron, and one AN-26 (CURL) military transport squadron. A second CURL squadron is in Cuba but bears Soviet civil markings (Table 1).

25X1

Table 1.
Cuban Air Order-of-Battle Summary

This table in its entirety is classified TOP SECRET RUFF

Type of Aircraft	Report Inventory ²	Function*	Number Of Squadrons	Number Observed	Remarks
FLOGGER	12	AD/GS	1	10	
FISHBED	125	AD/IRE	5	67	Plus 2 fighter/trainer detachments
FAGOT/ FRESCO	47	GS	4	47	
HIP	19	GS/TR	1	25-30	In addition to several ground support/transport detachments
HOUND	62	GP/TN	0	15-20	Being replaced by HIP variants; remaining aircraft organized in small detachments
COKE	3	TR	0	6	1 with craft insignia, 8 with Soviet markings, and 2 with Cubana Airlines markings
CURL	15	TR/GP	2	20	10 with craft insignia, 8 with Soviet markings, and 2 with Cubana Airlines markings
CLANK	-	AS/RE	0	2	Squadron element
CRATE/CAB	21	RE/TR	2	22	Organized into 5 detachments
CODLING	12	TR	0	10-12	4 associated with VIP transport; 8 prob operated by Cubana Airlines
COLT	59	TN/GP	4-5	50 (approx)	
*AD - Air defense	GP - General purpose	RE - Reconnaissance	TR - Transport		
AS - Aerial survey	GS - Ground support	TN - Trainer			

3. (TSR) CRAF squadrons appear to be composed of 10 to 12 aircraft each, except for HIP helicopter squadrons which may consist of 15 to 18 aircraft.

4. (TSR) There are approximately 200 airfields in Cuba. Of these, nine are considered to be of primary importance and eight are of secondary importance (Figure 1). Primary airfields are defined as those facilities currently hosting at least one military tactical or training squadron on a permanent basis or which have a moderate-to-heavy volume of civil or military air traffic. Secondary airfields are those facilities with no permanently assigned squadron elements and limited or no sustained air traffic but which could easily and rapidly support military or civil air operations in the event of a military or domestic emergency. Only those air facilities with runway lengths equal to or greater than 1,500 meters (approximately 5,000 feet) will be discussed in this report. This figure was chosen because it allows a reasonable operational safety margin for all aircraft currently in the Cuban inventory.

5. (TSR) Six of the nine designated primary airfields have a predominantly military association (Table 2). San Antonio de Los Baños Airfield has two high-performance fighter squadrons (one FLOGGER ground attack and one FISHBED air defense), one FISHBED reconnaissance squadron, and one detachment of two MI-8 (HIP) helicopters. Santa Clara Airfield houses five fighter squadrons—one FISHBED (air defense) and four FAGOT/FRESCO (ground attack/support). Holguin Airfield consists of two FISHBED (air defense) squadrons. Cienfuegos Airfield consists of one HIP helicopter attack squadron. Campo Libertad Airfield consists of one FISHBED air defense fighter detachment, one IL-14 (CRATE) reconnaissance squadron, two CURL military transport squadrons (one with Cuban markings and one with Soviet markings), one AN-30 (CLANK; aerial survey) detachment, and two or three AN-2 (COLT) squadrons whose function has not been identified. San Julian Airfield accommodates one COLT training squadron and one MI-4 (HOUND) helicopter training detachment.

6. (TSR) The three remaining primary airfields are used predominantly for civil air service but do occasionally service combat aircraft. The largest of these three, Jose Marti International Airfield, is the major civil air facility in Cuba. Although it has no permanently assigned military aircraft, it is the base of operations for most Soviet TU-95 (BEAR) deployments to Cuba. Antonio Maceo Airfield is the commercial air link with Santiago de Cuba and the assembly point for most, if not all, YAK-40 (CODLING) aircraft entering Cuba. Ignacio Agramonte Airfield apparently shares its facilities equally between transient civil and military aircraft, including deployments of fighter aircraft on training exercises in the area. One transport squadron consisting of COLT, CRATE, and LI-2 (CAB) aircraft is stationed at this airfield.

Top Secret RUFF

25X1

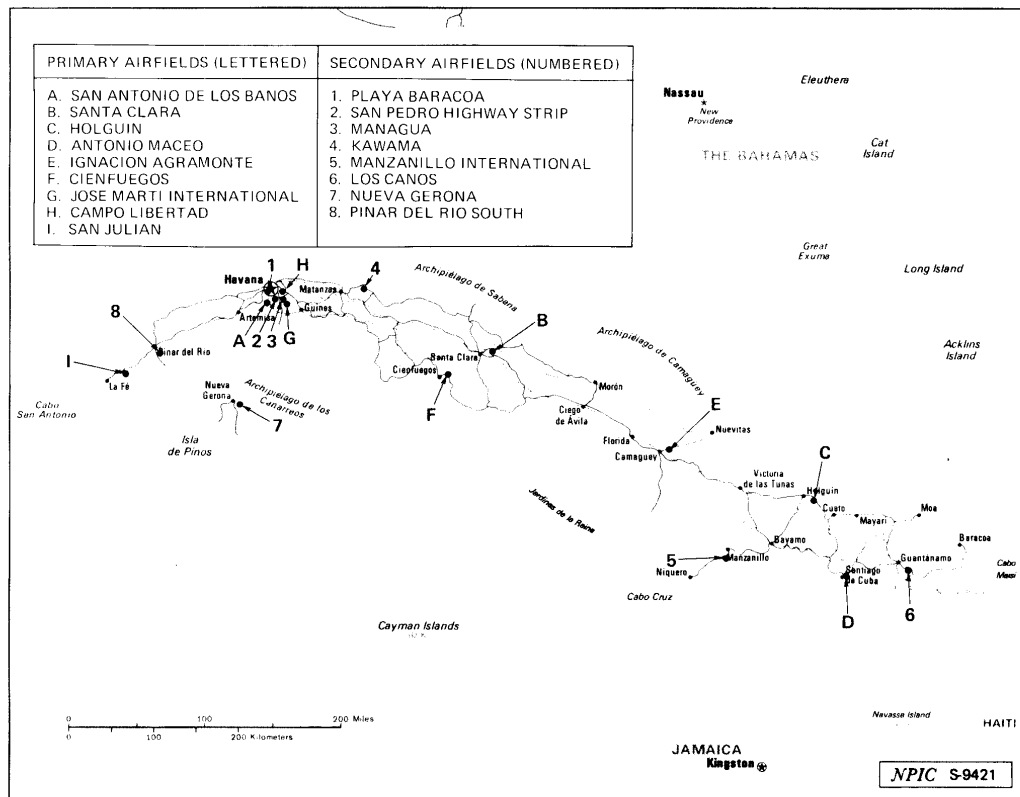


FIGURE 1. LOCATIONS OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY AIRFIELDS IN CUBA

7. (TSR) The secondary airfields serve a variety of functions but generally exhibit light flight activity. Playa Baracoa is the only designated secondary airfield housing an assigned aviation unit. It has a military transport detachment consisting of CODLING, AN-24 (COKE), and HIP aircraft. These assets are probably used in support of the Cuban Parachute Infantry (airborne) Battalion, which is quartered at the airfield, as well as for VIP support. Three of the secondary airfields (Kawama, Los Canos, and San Pedro Highway Strip) have been used infrequently and temporarily by fighter aircraft. Manzanillo International Airfield and Nueva Gerona Airfield (Isle of Pines) are civil air facilities. Managua Airfield is seldom used, but its close proximity to centers of Soviet and Cuban military activity necessitates its classification as a facility of potential significance. Pinar Del Rio South Airfield was observed in the early stages of construction.

8. (TSR) Electronics at Cuban airfields are relatively unsophisticated. All major airfields are equipped with ground controlled approach and/or instrument landing systems. Perhaps the most sophisticated airfield-associated electronics equipment in Cuba is the RSBN-4 tonal navigation system at San Antonio de Los Banos Airfield. However, two components of that system, the TALL PATH radar landing beacon and the THIN PATH landing radar are not present. This system is normally deployed in the Soviet Union, in countries receiving Soviet aid, and at airfields hosting third-generation, high-performance aircraft such as the FLOGGER and late-model FISHBED aircraft¹.

9. (TSR) Construction has been ongoing at several Cuban airfields during the past few years. The planned renovation of Jose Marti International Airfield is approximately 70 percent complete. All three major fighter bases have hardened aircraft shelters under construction in the following quantities: San Antonio de Los Banos Airfield, 16; Santa Clara Airfield, 16; and Holguin Airfield, 20. The primary runway at San Antonio de Los Banos Airfield has been extended as has the single runway at Ignacio Agramonte Airfield. The runway at Santa Clara Airfield was also in the early stages of lengthening. Runway resurfacing has occurred at numerous airfields including Santa Clara and Los Canos. Additional aircraft hardstands have been added at Campo Libertad and Cienfuegos Airfields.

10. (TSR) A new airfield, Manzanillo International, was constructed near Manzanillo in southeastern Cuba, and another new airfield, Pinar Del Rio South, with, as yet, undetermined proportions or function is in the early stages of construction in western Cuba, approximately 6 nautical miles (nm) south-southeast of Pinar Del Rio. When complete, the runway at the latter airfield will be approximately 2,000 meters in length.

Table 2.
Cuban Air Order-of-Battle Summary (by installation)

This table in its entirety is classified TOP SECRET RUFF

Airfield	Type Aircraft	High Count Observed	Probable Organizational Structure (Squadron Type)	Naval Aids	Remarks
San Antonio de Los Banos	FLOGGER	10	1 fighter	ONE EYE & TWO SPOT RSBN-4 tonal navigation system	Hq - CRAFT; prob Hq Western air defense zone; Major fighter base; 16 hangarages ucon
	FISHBED	26	1 reconnaissance 1 fighter trainer detachment 1 fighter		
	FAGOT	10	Prob derelict		
	HIP	2	1 ground support/transport detachment		
Santa Clara	FISHBED	12	1 fighter		Hq - Central air defense zone; 16 hangarages ucon
	FRESCO	26	2 fighter		
	FAGOT	21	2 fighter		
	HOUND	4	1 ground support/transport detachment		
Holguin	HIP	2	1 ground support/transport detachment	ONE EYE & TWO SPOT	Hq - Eastern air defense zone; 20 hangarages ucon
	FISHBED	24	2 fighter		
	HOUND	4	1 ground support/transport detachment		
Cienfuegos	HIP	6	1 prob attack helicopter		Central air defense zone
	HIP-F	16	1 prob attack helicopter		
Campo Libertad	FISHBED	5	1 fighter detachment		National air defense Hq; Assem point for HIP, CURL, and prob CLANK aircraft
	CRATE	5	1 reconnaissance detachment		
	CURL	20*	2 transport		
	CLANK	2	1 aerial survey squadron element (prob)		
	HIP	23	Most transferred to Cienfuegos Airfield		
	COLT	29	2-3 unit		
Ignacion Agramonte	COLT	14			Eastern air defense zone; utilized occasionally by visiting fighter aircraft
	CRATE	1	1 transport		
	CAB	3			
San Julian	COLT	15	1 training		Western air defense zone; basic flight training center
	HOUND	4	1 training detachment		
Jose Marti International	Various transport and commercial	—	—		Western air defense zone; major civil international airfield; accommodates Soviet B-67AR deployments; major renovation underway
Antonio Maceo	COLT	5	1 transport detachment		Eastern air defense zone; civil air orientation; assem point for CODLING aircraft
	CRATE	8			
	CODLING	6-8			
Playa Baracoa	COKE	3			Western air defense zone; support base for a Cuban airborne battalion.
	HIP	4	1 transport detachment		
Managua	CODLING	3-4**			Western air defense zone; no aircraft assigned to this facility
	—	—			
San Pedro Highway Airstrip	—	—			Western air defense zone; no assigned aircraft; presumably used in support of Lourdes central sigint complex; recent improvements have taken place
Kawama	—	—			Central air defense zone; no assigned aircraft
Los Canos	—	—			Eastern air defense zone; no assigned aircraft; runway being resurfaced.
Manzanillo International	—	—			Eastern air defense zone; no assigned aircraft; facility still ucon
Nueva Gerona	—	—			No assigned aircraft

*Ten with Cuban airforce markings; eight with Soviet markings (prob Aeroflot); and two with Cubana Airlines markings.

**Probably transferred from Campo Libertad airfield in 1979.

Top Secret RUFF [REDACTED]

25X1

BASIC DESCRIPTION

Primary Airfields

San Antonio de Los Banos Airfield

11. (TSR) This airfield is 0.5 nm southwest of the city of San Antonio de Los Banos (Figures 1 and 2). It is a major fighter base, reportedly the headquarters for the CRAF² and the probable headquarters for the Western Air Defense Zone. It hosts one FLOGGER ground attack squadron, one FISHBED air defense squadron, one FISHBED reconnaissance squadron, and a small detachment of HIP helicopters (Table 2). The FLOGGER squadron is the first and only one of its type identified thus far in Cuba.

12. (TSR) Facilities include three runways (4,069 by 46 meters, 2,149 by 46 meters, and 2,134 by 46 meters), two parallel taxiways, three parking aprons, 32 circular concrete hardstands, 56 hangar-ettes (16 under construction), four end-connecting links, two crossover links, and dispersal taxiways connecting all three runways.

Santa Clara Airfield

13. (TSR) This airfield is 5.4 nm north-northeast of the city of Santa Clara (Figures 1 and 3). It is the most important air base in central Cuba and reportedly is the headquarters for the Central Air Defense Zone² as well as host to at least five fighter squadrons, including one FISHBED; an air defense squadron; and a detachment of HOUND and HIP helicopter (Table 2). Older FAGOT/FRESCO aircraft are currently being replaced at this base by recently acquired additional FISHBED.

14. (TSR) Facilities include one recently resurfaced 2,591- by 50-meter runway with an additional 760 meters in the grading stages of construction, one parallel taxiway, three parking aprons (one primarily used by civil air traffic), one alert apron, 43 hangar-ettes (16 under construction), and two hangars (one under construction). Two end connecting links and three crossover links connect the runway and taxiway.

Holguin Airfield

15. (TSR) This airfield is 7 nm south-southwest of the city of Holguin (Figures 1 and 4). It is the major air facility in eastern Cuba and serves as the air defense headquarters for that portion of the island.² The airfield houses at least two FISHBED interceptor squadrons and a small helicopter detachment consisting of HOUND and HIP aircraft (Table 2). The airfield also has a secondary civil air function.

16. (TSR) Permanent facilities include one 3,200- by 50-meter runway, one parallel taxiway, two end-connecting links, two crossover links, one alert apron, two parking aprons (one for civil aircraft), two hangars, and 51 hangar-ettes (20 in varying stages of construction).

Cienfuegos Airfield

17. (TSR) This airfield is in the city of Cienfuegos in south-central Cuba (Figures 1 and 5). It is the second most important airfield in that sector

of the island and home for the first Cuban HIP attack helicopter squadron (Table 2). Although relatively small, this airfield could function as an alternate fighter base as well as continue its secondary civil air function.

18. (TSR) The facilities include one 1,524 by 46-meter runway, one parking apron for transient aircraft, and ten helicopter parking pads.

Campo Libertad Airfield

19. (TSR) This airfield is 5.6 nm southwest of Havana Harbor (Figures 1 and 6). It is reported to be the national headquarters for DAAFAR (anti-air defense).¹ Assigned aviation assets include a detachment of FISHBED, 20 CURL aircraft (eight with Soviet civil markings), a detachment of HIP helicopters, two CLANK aerial survey aircraft, a detachment of CRATE (probably reconnaissance), and two or three COLT squadrons (Table 2). An aviation repair and assembly depot repairs civil and military aircraft in addition to assembling the HIP, CURL, and CLANK aircraft.

20. (TSR) Permanent facilities include two serviceable runways (2,070 by 46 meters and 1,600 by 46 meters), two taxiways, three parking aprons, six parking pads, and four hangars.

Ignacion Agramonte Airfield

21. (TSR) Formerly known as Camaguey International Airfield, this airfield is 5 nm east-northeast of the city of Camaguey (Figures 1 and 7). It is second in importance only to Holguin Airfield in this sector of Cuba. Although primarily a civilian airfield, it is frequently used by tactical military aircraft, particularly during joint forces exercises in the Camaguey area.

22. (TSR) Assigned aviation elements include one probable COLT squadron and a detachment of CRATE and CAB transport aircraft (Table 2). Limited available facilities include one 3,320 by 60-meter runway, three aircraft parking aprons, one parallel taxiway, and one double-bay hangar.

San Julian Airfield

23. [REDACTED] This airfield is 31 nm southwest of Pinar Del Rio (Figures 1 and 8). It is

[REDACTED] Assigned aircraft include a squadron of COLT and a detachment of HOUND helicopters.

24. (TSR) Permanent facilities include two runways (2,590 by 46 meters and 2,207 by 46 meters), one taxiway, two parking aprons, six circular hardstands, 28 aircraft tie-down positions, and one small hangar.

Jose Marti International Airfield

25. (TSR) This airfield is 9.5 nm south-southwest of Havana Harbor (Figures 1 and 9). Although undergoing complete renovation, it is the largest and most heavily used civil airfield in Cuba and is capable of handling military aircraft. Soviet Bear-D deployments to Cuba usually use this facility.

25X1

25X1

25X1

Page Denied

Top Secret RUFF

25X1

25X1

26. (TSR) Major facilities include one 4,084- by 61-meter runway, six aircraft parking aprons, one parallel taxiway, two end-connecting links, and five crossover links. When the renovation is complete, the airfield will have a large, new terminal complex as well as expanded aircraft parking and maintenance facilities.

Antonio Maceo Airfield

27. (TSR) This airfield is 3.4 nm south of Santiago de Cuba (Figures 1 and 10). Although primarily a civil air facility, limited numbers of combat aircraft can and have been deployed here for short periods of time. It is also the assembly point for most CODLING aircraft in the Cuban inventory.

28. (TSR) Facilities include two runways (2,301 by 46 meters and 1,387 by 46 meters) two parking aprons, 14 aircraft revetments, and one hangar.

Secondary Airfields

Playa Baracoa Airfield

29. (TSR) This airfield is 14.3 nm southwest of Havana harbor (Figures 1 and 11) and has a primarily military function (i.e. the aviation support base for a Cuban Airborne Battalion is quartered there). It is also probable that VIP-associated transport aircraft operate from this installation. Assigned aviation assets appear to consist of a transportation detachment of COKE, CODLING, and HIP aircraft (Table 2).

30. (TSR) Facilities consist of one 1,800- by 50-meter runway, two parking aprons, and two hangars.

Managua Airfield

31. (TSR) This airfield is 7 nm southeast of Havana (Figures 1 and 12). Although seldom used, it is very close to centers of Cuban and Soviet military activity in the area and would almost certainly be reactivated in the event of a military emergency of national proportions.

32. (TSR) Facilities include one well maintained 2,316- by 43-meter runway, a parallel taxiway, one aircraft parking apron, and four aircraft parking revetments. No aircraft are assigned to this installation.

San Pedro Highway Strip

33. (TSR) This airfield is 8 nm southwest of Havana and adjacent to the Soviet-controlled Lourdes Central SIGINT Complex (Figures 1 and 13). It is the only known highway airstrip in Cuba and probably functions as a contingency air facility for use by Soviet forces in the Lourdes area. Although apparently unused by air traffic for several years, recent surface improvements and the refurbishing of aircraft parking revetments could signal forthcoming aircraft usage.

34. (TSR) Facilities include one 3,246- by 43-meter runway and eight aircraft parking revetments.

(Continued p. 12)

Top Secret

RC A-05/0002/80

25X1

Page Denied

Next 3 Page(s) In Document Denied

Kawama Airfield

35. (TSR) This airfield is 16 nm east-north-east of Matanzas (Figures 1 and 14). It appears to serve a regional civil air function in addition to its probable use as an auxiliary military base during joint force exercises. It almost certainly has an important role in supporting escalating oil exploitation programs currently being conducted in the immediate area.

36. (TSR) Facilities include one 2,204- by 50-meter runway, one large aircraft parking apron, and an aircraft turnaround area. No aircraft are known to be assigned to this facility.

Los Canos Airfield

37. (TSR) This airfield is 4 nm southeast of Guantanamo (Figures 1 and 15). Although seldom used, this airfield possibly serves as an alternate fighter base for the Eastern Air Defense Zone. Resurfacing of the 2,469- by 53-meter runway began in mid-1979, indicating increased future usage in an as yet undetermined capacity. Among the possible future uses for this airfield are increased civil air service to the Guantanamo area and the

temporary deployment of combat aircraft as a deterrent to US Forces stationed at Guantanamo Bay.

Manzanillo International Airfield

38. (TSR) This airfield is 3.5 nm south-southeast of Manzanillo (Figures 1 and 16). Although its international function has not been determined, this newly constructed airfield will almost certainly become the center for civil air activity in the Manzanillo area.

39. (TSR) Facilities include one 1,860- by 30-meter runway, an aircraft parking apron, and an aircraft turnaround area.

Nueva Gerona Airfield

40. (TSR) This airfield is on the Isle of Pines, 3 nm south-southeast of Nueva Gerona (Figures 1 and 17). It is the most developed airfield on the island and serves primarily civil air traffic to and from mainland Cuba. It consists of two runways (2,012 by 32 meters and 1,524 by 32 meters) and two parking aprons for aircraft.

Page Denied

Next 3 Page(s) In Document Denied

Top Secret RUFF [REDACTED]

25X1

REFERENCES

IMAGERY

(TSR) All applicable KEYHOLE imagery acquired from [REDACTED] 25X1
[REDACTED] and limited quantities of [REDACTED] 25X1
were used in the preparation of this report.

DOCUMENTS

1. USAF. 460th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron, [REDACTED] *Deployed Electronics Facilities, Cuba*, 15 May 78 (TOP SECRET) 25X1
2. USAF. 460th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron Report CL-110-5, *Caribbean Forces Air Defense Order of Battle*, 1 Sep 79 (SECRET)
3. NSA. 2/00/12250-77, *The Cuban Air Defense System*, 13 Sep 77 (SECRET) [REDACTED] 25X1

MAPS OR CHARTS

ONC. Sheet J-26, scale 1:1,000,000 (UNCLASSIFIED)

REQUIREMENT

COMIREX E03
Project 200002DE

(S) Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [REDACTED] Third World 25X1
Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [REDACTED] 25X1

Top Secret



Top Secret